14: Huntingford E-5 (1938-1939) 1942 FL6 Dorobo FL6

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[Title Page]

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FLS Dorobo FLS

# THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE DOROBO[1]

By G. W. B. HUNTINGFORD

## I

The Dorobo, who call themselves Okiek, are a forest-dwelling people scattered over the highlands of Kenya and Tanganyika. Twelve groups[2] are recorded, and it is known that they are all hunters, and that all speak dialects of Nandi. The group which forms the subject of this paper lives in the North Tindiret forest to the S. E. of the Nandi Reserve, at an average altitude of over 8000 ft., and actually on the equator. In this area there were formerly six inhabited districts, called Kelpui, Kipkorom, Sosoiyo, Chepurur, Sirua, and Mokopich, while some five or six miles to the south there lived another group on Tindiret hill. My investigations have been limited to the first three of these divisions, since Chepurur, Sirua, and Mokopich no longer exist, and the remnant on Tindiret form a distinct group.

At least fifteen years ago the Dorobo were forbidden by the government to live in the forest reserve, which comprises the whole of their country, and those that did so, unless as squatters of the Forest

[1] The field-work on which this paper is based was carried out between May 1938 and November 1939 under a Leverhulme Research Fellowship, and I wish to express my gratitude to this organisation for making the work possible.

[2] The actual distribution is: Kenya, 9 groups; Tanganyika, 3 groups. See Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst., 1929, LIX. 336 and fig. 2.

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# THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE DOROBO[1]

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Department, were held guilty of a crime they did not understand. In 1937, in accordance with the decision of the Kenya Land Tenure Commission of 1932, they were forcibly driven out of the forest and settled in the Nandi Reserve. This attempt to settle them outside their native forest was a failure, and they are now an uncared for, landless group of outcasts living a precarious existence on the farms which stretch up to the edge of the forest. Unless they work on a farm, their very existence here is illegal, and although they are permitted to live in Nandi, the majority do not want to, and are bitterly resentful of being kept out of their own home. I had fortunately made their acquaintance in 1927, and when I returned to make fuller investigations in 1938, I had little difficulty in overcoming the fear and distrust engendered by the government's actions, and I found that in spite of everything they were still living as far as possible in accordance with their traditional organization.

As regards their numbers, the census I took showed a total of 221 people. This is probably not the full total, but I do not think it is very much short of the real total. The census and genealogies also revealed that they were divided into seven clans; the census results may be summarized thus:—

[P. 183, B]

A. DISTRICT TOTALS

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| DISTRICT | ♂ Single | ♂ Married | ♀ | ♂ Children | ♀ Children | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| KIPKOROM | 8 | 6 | 14 | 9 | 10 | 47 |
| SOSOIYO | 22 | 19 | 26 | 16 | 19 | 102 |
| KELPUI | 25 | 18 | 16 | 8 | 5 | 72 |
| | 55 | 43 | 56 | 33 | 34 | 221 |

Total ♂: 131. Total ♀: 90.

[P.183,C]

B. DISTRIBUTION

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| | *In forest* | *On farms close to forest* | *On farms away from forest* | *In Nandi, etc.* | *Uncertain domicile* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| KIPKOROM | — | 28 | 10 | 9 | — |
| SOSOIYO | 13 | 58 | — | 28 | 3 |
| KELPUI | — | 43 | 21 | 8 | — |
| | 13 | 129 | 31 | 45 | 3 |

C. CLAN ANALYSIS

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| *CLAN* | KIPKOROM | SOSOIYO | KELPUI | *TOTALS* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| KAPSEGOI | 13 | 27 | 36 | 76 |
| MOI | 25 | 12 | 17 | 54 |
| KIPIEGEN | 6 | 10 | 2 | 18 |
| KIPAMWI | — | 9 | — | 9 |
| KAPIL | — | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| TOITOI | — | 3 | — | 3 |
| KORAPOR | — | — | 1 | 1 |
| Uncertain | 3 | 39 | 13 | 55 |
| | 47 | 102 | 72 | 221 |

[P.184, A]

[p.184, B]

The social structure of the Dorobo is based on clan-solidarity, the clans being patrilineal, partially patrilocal, and exogamous. The clan-names, as well as the age-set names, and many of the relationship terms, are of Nandi origin; but here the resemblance ends, and it is seen that the social structure is unlike that of the Nandi. The whole life and outlook of the people is, in fact, dissimilar. There is no doubt that living in and in close contact with a forest produces a considerable effect on people, which differentiates them from those who live in open country; and the influence of the forest is felt particularly by the children. Peculiar factors of forest life, which obviously cannot occur in open country, are:

1. The homestead is set in a small clearing, just large enough to hold two or three huts.

2. The continual presence of large trees, inescapable when the children are young.

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[P.184, C]

3. The depressing influence on the mind of trees in mass. 182 139

4. The effect of being cut off from neighbours; even if the next settlement is but a few yards away, it cannot be seen, and the trees act as an enclosing wall forming an impenetrable barrier. [361]

5. Forest life tends to produce shyness and timidity, especially with strangers, who, not being expected, and having presumably no legitimate business, are thought to have bad intentions. 157 182 [609]

Some of the differences between the Dorobo and the Nandi, which are produced by these factors, are:

Shyness; comparative absence of laughter; seriousness of outlook; nearness to nature, as shown by the weather- and animal-sense of the Dorobo; and the comparative honesty of the Dorobo. Even when Dorobo leave the forest and mix with others, they still retain these characteristics.

[P.185, A]

Physical influences, too, must be taken into account. The average rainfall in the North Tindiret forest is over 56 inches per annum, and the highest recorded rainfall in one year is 70 inches. During several months of the year the forest is very damp and sunless; mists are frequent, and there is considerable cold as well as frost.[1] All this will affect character as well as the rate of infant mortality. 132 [55] [166]

## II.

## THE BASIS OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE.

### *A. Kinship.*

Many of the relationship terms are borrowed from Nandi, but the system is not the same, as the following analysis will show. 601 [177]

Functional analysis of terms: ♂ speaking (M.S.)

*First Ascending Generation.*

(1) F., M.=***BABA***, *eiyo*.

(2) M.Br., M.Br.W.=***MAMA***, *mama*.

(3) M.Sis., M.Sis. H.=*eiyo*, ***BABA***, as F. and M.

(4) F. Br., F. Br. W.=***BABA***, *eiyo*. "The F.Br. is the same as a man's father," say the Dorobo.

(5) F.Sis.=*pukot*, a term applied also to the wives of F.Br.S., F.Sis.S., Br., M.Sis. S., and to W. Sis. It implies that all the women so called come into the same category of respect as the F.Sis.

(6) F. Sis. H.=*konyit*, i.e. brother-in-law,

[1] So the Dorobo tell me: I never saw any myself, though I have seen frost in other parts of the highlands of Kenya. [114]

[P185,B]

applied also to the husbands of F. Br. D., F.Sis.D., Sis., M.Br. D., M.Sis.D., and to W.Br. It is therefore the male equivalent of *pukot*. 601

*Second Ascending Generation.*

(1) F.F., F.M., and M.F., M.M.=*KUKO, koko*, and also *AGWI, agwi*, the latter applied by courtesy to F.F.Br., M.F.Br., F.F.Sis., M.F.Sis., and their children.

*Third Ascending Generation.*

(1) F.F.F., F.F.M., F.M.F., F.M.M., M.F.F., M.F.M., M.M.F., M.M.M.=*MACHOKOR, makikat.*

*Ego's own Generation.*

(1) Br., Sis., M.Sis.S., M.Sis.D.=*KESENDA, Kesenda*, linking these two groups in a br.—sis. relationship.

(2) M.Br. S., M.Br. D.=*MAMA, mama*, as M.Br.

(3) F.Br. S., F.Br. D., F.Sis. S., F.Sis.D.=*MACHOKOR, machokor.*

There is here a sharp distinction between cousins on the father's and the mother's side, the former being linked with 3rd ascending and 1st descending generations, the latter with one's brothers and sisters. [605]

*First Descending Generation.*

(1) Children both ♂ and ♀ of F.Br.S. and D. and of F.Sis. S. and D. are *MACHOKOR*, the same as their parents. According to Dorobo statements, a man is allowed to marry his F. Sis. D.D.—his *machokor*—, but no other woman whom he calls by a relationship term. [582]

[P.185, C]

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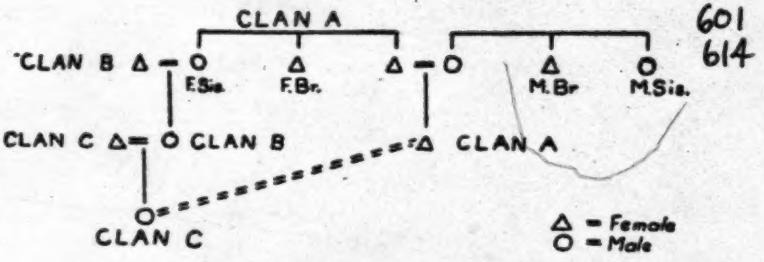


THEORETICAL MARRIAGE WITH ESis.D.D.

This statement is not supported by any of my genealogies, but this does not necessarily mean it has never occurred, and my informants were unanimous in asserting it. A man can therefore in theory marry his classificatory grand-daughter; he would not be likely to do so in fact on account of the shortage of women, and the lack of wealth. [595]

582 602

[Text continues TOP of P. 186, B - Analyst]

(2) Ego's S. and D., and Br. S. and D.= ***APAA, apaa.*** 601

(3) Children both ♂ and ♀ of Sis., and of M. Br. S.=***MAMA, mama,*** placing them in the M.Br. category, an unusual feature, since the Nandi (and ? Masae) group M.Br. and M.Br. S. together, but have no term for M. Br. S.S., who is outside the ***tiliet*** or relationship.

(4) M.Br.D.S. and D.=***MAMA, mama,*** again different from the Nandi, who regard them as outside the ***tiliet.***

(5) Children both ♂ and ♀ of M.Sis. S. and D.= ***KESENDA, Kesenda,*** placing them in the same category as Br., Sis., and M.Sis.S, and D.

*Second Descending Generation.*

(1) Son's S. and D., Dau's S. and D.= ***AGWI, agwi,*** i.e. they call ego ***agwi***=grandfather; and all of this generation are ***agwi*** to ego, i.e. all children of ***machokor, apaa,*** and ***mama,*** though not of M.Sis.S.S., who are ***kesenda.***

[Text continues middle of P. 186, B - Analyst]

[P.186,B]

for if, e.g. a man was forty years old, and his *machokor* was only ten, he could marry her only as a second wife, a luxury which few Dorobo can attain. And again, owing to the small number of clans, the F.Sis. D.D. is often of the same clan, and so barred from marriage, as in the following case: 582 602 [595]

Functional analysis of terms : ♀ speaking. (W.S.) 601

*First Ascending Generation.*

(1) F.Br., M.Sis. are ***BABA***, *eiyo*, the same as when a man is speaking.

(2) M.Br.=***APULAIYO***, <Masae *apula*, <*apu*, M.Br. (M.S.); M.Br.W.=*eiyo* as M.S.

(3) M.Sis.Hus.=***KONYIT***, the ordinary term for a male relative by marriage, i.e. "husband," and applied also to the same other catagories as M.S.

(4) F.Sis., F.Br.W.=*Sindet*.

Terms for second and third ascending generations are the same as M.S.

*Ego's own Generation.*

As when M.S., there is a distinction between the paternal and maternal sides. The children of F.Br. and F.Sis. are all grouped as ***MACHOKOR***, *machokor*, while on on the maternal side we have :— [602]

(1) M.Br.S. and D.=***AGWI***, *agwi*.

(2) M.Sis.S. and D.=***EIYO***, *eiyo* :—

[P. 186, C]

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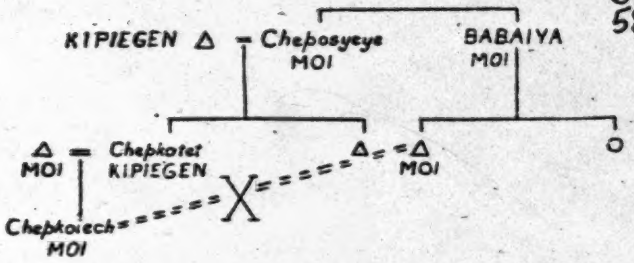
582




CLAN - BAR TO ES.DD. MARRIAGE

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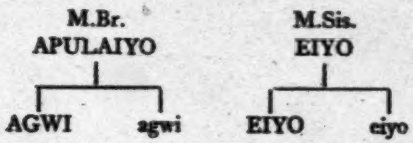



W.S.

(3) Br., Sis.=*KESENDA*, *kesenda*.

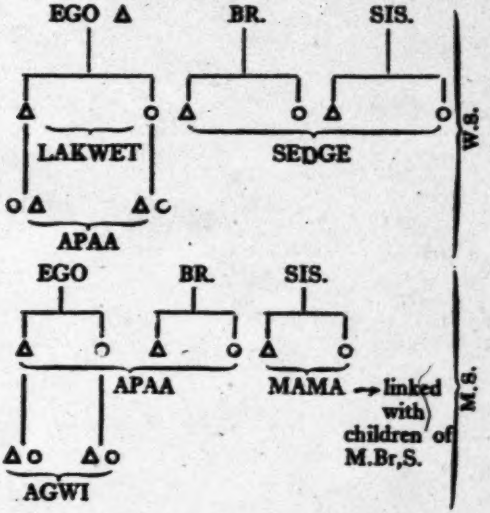
*First Descending Generation.*

(1) Children of *MACHOKOR* are also *MACHOKOR*.

(2) Ego's children ♂ and ♀=*LAKWET*, *Lakwet*.

(3) Children ♂ and ♀ of Br., Sis.=*SEDGE*, *sedge*.

When W.S., children of this generation are grouped differently:




*Second Descending Generation.*

(1) Children both ♂ and ♀ of S. and D.=*APAA*, *apaa*, transferred from first descending generation M.S.

*Linguistic Analysis of Relationship Terms.*

*BABA*=F., F.Br., M.Sis.H. Allied to Masae *papa*, Bari *baba*, and probably to Ndi *apa* (Gala *aba*), all meaning 'father.' [191]

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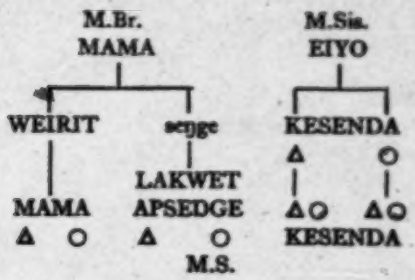


*MAMA*=M.Br., M.Br.W. Ndi *mama*, and possibly akin to Bari *mama-ye*. 601 197

*EIYO*=M., M.Sis., F.Br.W. Nandi *eiyo*, Masae *yeiyo*, and in most of the Nandi dialects for "mother." An occasional alternative for *eiyo* in Dorobo is *POKINE*, which in Nandi means Hus.Br.W.

*AGWI*=F.Br., his children and grandchildren. Nandi *agwi*, Masae *ol-akwi*='grandfather.' Cf. Bari *akwe* < *kwe*, 'head.'

*KOKO*=F.M., M.M. Nandi and Masae *koko*, 'old woman,' i.e. grandmother. And cf. Masae *eng-ōgho*, old woman.

*PUKOT*=F.Sis. This might be from a stem occurring in Bari *puk*, 'germinate,' but I think it is more likely to be a remnant of the original Dorobo terminology.

*KONYIT*=F.Sis.H. etc. Nandi *konyit* means 'honour,' and cf. the Masae term *e-sindani e-anyit*, 'respected sister in law,'=Br.W. and W.Sis.

*KUKO*=F.F., M.F. Nandi *kuko* is the masc. form of *koko*, and hence='old man,' i.e. grandfather, like Nandi *inguget*, *ingoget*, the reference forms for *kuko*, *koko*.

*MACHOKOR*=F.F.F. etc. Nandi *machokor* =S.S. and S.D. The etymology may be Luo *chokore*, 'collect,' hence it would signify 'a collection of relatives.'

*MAKIKAT*=F.F.M. etc. Not a Nandi term, but perhaps of Nandi origin, i.e. *ma-ki-ikat*, "They are not greeted," because though their names are known, none are ever alive in ego's life-time.

*KESENDA*=Br., Sis., M.Sis.S. and D. Nandi dialect for Br., Sis., the true Nandi being *tupchet*. Possibly < Nandi *kesen*, 'carry a

[P.188, A]

child,' it being one of the duties of a young girl to carry her small brother or sister. 601 197

*APAA*—children of *apo* and *apo*'s Br. May be connected etymologically with Nandi *apa* —M.Sin.H., *F.Br.S.* (*a'-f-apa*,) meaning 'father,' and used elliptically in Dorobo to mean '(children of) father.'

*APULAIYO*—M.Br. < Masai *apulo* < *apo*.

*SINDET*—*F.Sis.*, *F.Br.W.* < stem found in Masai *e-sindani*, 'sister in law.' *Sindet* (W.S.) is thus the equivalent of *pakat* (M.S.) and must mean 'one to whom respect is due.'

The Dorobo normally live in family groups, either one or more elementary families or domestic families[1] forming an extended family, or one or more elementary or domestic families of fellow clansmen, e.g.: 59

1. (a) *Fraternal group: three brothers*

| D.F. | E.F. | E.F. |
|---|---|---|
| (*Hut 1*) | (*Hut 2*) | (*Hut 3*) |
| E. Br. | 2 Br. | Y. Br. |

\+ F. or M.

1. (b) *Extended patrilocal family*

| E.F. | E.F. |
|---|---|
| (*Hut 1*) | (*Hut 2*) |
| F. and M. | E. son, wife, and children |

2. *Clan group*

| E.F. | E.F. | |
|---|---|---|
| (*Hut 1*) | (*Hut 2*) | (*Hut 3*) |
| Man and wife | Man and wife | ♀ Mother of 1 |

The people under whose influence a child will come are thus: in (1) (a): F., M., one of the 2nd ascending generation, *F.Br.*, *F.Br.W.*, with *F.Br.* S. and D. as associates. In (1) (b): F., M., *F.F.*, and *F.M.* In (2): F., M., one of the 2nd ascending generation, with clansmen as associates. The people normally responsible for the bringing up 602 [855]

[1] Definitions of "family":
*Elementary family*—F., M., and children. (E.F.)
*Domestic family*—a group of people living together in one house or enclosure, if based on an elementary family, e.g. one husband, two wives, and the children of each wife. (D.F.)
*Extended family*—a group of families related by genealogy or adoption living together as a defined unit, e.g. Father, and son and his wives and children form a patrilocal extended family. (Ext. F.)

and education of children may be grouped according to the amount of influence they exert, and as primary collection are to be included: F., M., F.Br., F.Si. W., F.F., F.M.; as secondary collection, M.Br., M.Br.W., F.Si., F.Da. H., M.Si., M.Si.H., and eldermith (relations) in the persons of elsewhere living in the group. The M.Br. does not occupy the same place with regard to a child that he does in Nandi. He does not live in the same group, whereas the F.Br. frequently does, and as the F.Br. has the greater influence on the child. Many Dorobo, in fact, have had little or nothing to do with their M.Br., and some do not even know their names. In the following Kelpsi genealogy,

KIRUWAI—?
Kipkoilwet

CHEPUNO — ? KIPTEREI— ?
Kimojiko

KIPLEDOWET ? JUMA ?
Moiso d.p.

Kipkoggwet had hardly ever seen Kipsoro, and could not even remember his name, till another person told him. Juma similarly did not know the name of his M.Br.

The relationship system of the Dorobo thus differs from the Nandi, especially in the following:

(1) Children of F.Br. and F.Si. are classed as *MACHOEOR*.
(2) Children of M.Si. are classed with Br. and Si. as *KESENDA*.
(3) Children of age and his Br. are classed as *APAA*.
(4) Children of M.Br. and age's Si. are classed as *MAMA*.
(5) Children in the 2nd descending generation are *AGWI*.
(6) The F.Br. takes the place of M.Br.

*B. Age-sets and Initiation pattern.*

The Dorobo have seven age-sets, *Ipinde*, pl. *Ipinogik*, with three age-grades in each set. These sets are borrowed from the Nandi, and have the same 15-year intervals, and the same three sub-divisions.

[P 189, A]

The age-grades, through which a person passes in turn are:

| ♂ | ♀ |
|---|---|
| *gutik*: uncircumcised boys. | *Tipik*: girls. |
| *Marnuik*: circumcised men. | *Yuuuik*: married women. |
| *Apuiuiuk*: elders. | *Ilgilugiuiuk*: old women. |

Boys are *gutik* till circumcised, when they become *marnuik* for the 13-year period of their age-set and then *apuiuiuk* when the change over occurs.[1] The sub-divisions, *muuiuuuk*, of the Dundas age-sets—each set has the same three sub-divisions—are called:

| | |
|---|---|
| Senior: | *Chegiuiuk*. |
| Middle: | *Tipuruk* or *Kipuiluguk*. |
| Junior: | *Ruuuduuuk* or *Kipuiuiuk*. |

A man belongs normally to the age-set but one below that of his father, i.e.:

| Age-set: | Eldest son usually belongs to: | Youngest son may belong to: |
|---|---|---|
| *Kipkuiuet* | *Kimujulu* | *Nyungi* |
| *Kipkiluk* | *Nyungi* | *Mutuu* |
| *Kimujulu* | *Mutuu* | *Juuu* |
| *Nyungi* | *Juuu* | *Juuu* |
| *Mutuu* | *Juuu* | *Kipkuiuet* |
| *Juuu* | *Kipkuiuet* | *Kipkiluk* |
| *Juuu* | *Kipkiluk* | *Kimujulu* |

It may happen, as in Nauuk, that a man will be [191] classed with an age-set but two below that of his father (as in the last column above), because he was born so long after his father's marriage that he would be too young to be circumcised with the age he would normally belong to.

With these terminological features, the constitution of the Dundas age-sets to the Nauuk ends. They have no military functions at all, and their [190] sole significance is behaviouristic. As an element [192] in social structure the age-sets cut across the [202] formal kinship patterns, and behaviour is not wholly reflected in the kinship system; when the two elements clash, the age-set pattern prevails. In a short summary it is not possible to go into details, but the following genealogy will illustrate it sufficiently:

[1] See J.R.A.I. loc. cit., for further details of the Nauuk age-sets.

CHEPOWAITA —
♀ — KIPKEME
KINEGAI — ♀
KOROGOCH — ♀
KIPTANUI
KEMMO
KIMITEI
KIPET
KIPOR
JUMA
KIPKUTIK
LETEPA
LEINA
KIPLAT
KIPKEINO
Maina
Jumo
Nyaggi
(The bottom line shows the age-sets to which the sons of the 3rd line would normally belong.)

[P. 89, 6]

[P.190,A]

Although by relationship all these brothers are theoretically equals, as being brothers, yet by reason of their age-grouping different age-sets are found in all three families, with the result that Kimitei and Kipkotik are socially inferior to their brothers Kiptanui, Kosimo, and Kipet, Kipor; while Loimo, Kipilat, and Kipkeino are all inferior to Lesiipe. So long as they were small this did not matter, but when they reached puberty, the inferiority of their status became noticeable in such things as exclusion from all sexual matters, and is reflected in the general idea that " So and so is only a child, and he must not expect to do the grown-up things that we are allowed to do." The same will apply to the next generation. 561 602 [858]

The general principles of Dorobo behaviour may be summarised thus (from the standpoint of " age "): 602

To the 3rd and 2nd ascending generations: care and respect.

To the 1st ascending generation: respect, obedience (and care when old). Easy and familiar intercourse. Same [illegible] as own language.

To his own generation: considerable latitude is allowed between members of the same generation: obscene talk and jests, discussion of sexual matters and so forth are tolerated, though of course such talk must not become acts. The idea of mutual help and support, which is accorded by all to their parents and grandparents (when these are still alive) is more emphasised in the interrelations of those of the same generation.

To the 1st descending generation: all members of this are treated much as age treats his own children (and this applies more or less to the 2nd descending generation). In this category are also included those members of one's own generation, e.g. younger brother, who belong to a junior age-set.

To affinals: wife's mother must be avoided, both indoors and out, and must not be spoken to; if met on a road, a man must get off the road out of her sight. The wife's father need not be avoided, and 606

[P. 190, B]

606

may be greeted, though not talked to otherwise. Other relations of the wife are treated as the 1st ascending generation, and their children as one's own. But as men get older, the complete avoidance of their wife's mother tends to relax, though never at any time is there ordinary intercourse between them.

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*C. The Clan and Marriage Regulations.*

Marriage regulations are based on the clan system, and the general rule is that a man may not marry within his clan. The clan, *oret*, is the basis of social organization, and the social aspect of the clan is emphasized by the habit of living [361] in clan settlements, by the clan councils where [627] matters like land boundaries, marriages, and minor offences between clansmen are discussed, and by the stress laid on the group-aspect of the clan rather than on its animal-aspect (i.e. "totem"). The Nandi, for example, talk of *tiond' ap oranyîd*, 'the animal of my clan' or. *tiondanyîd* 'my animal'; whereas the Dorobo say *orayon*, 'my clan'. There are no prohibitions concerning the clan-animal (*tiondo*), which in fact has no ritual social value, though as a source of food it has an actual social value.

Two clans, Moi and Kapsegoi, have the same *tiondo* (the crested crane), and marriage between these two is allowed, because the *oret* is different, although the *tiondo* is the same. It may be noted, too, that in the case of the Moi, a Moi may marry a Moi woman, provided she belongs to 'another house,' *het ake*, that is, lives in another district, and is not a blood relation. Clansmen are regarded as ñiloontik, 'relations' and are addressed as *orayon*, 'my clan[sman],' or as *ar' t' apus*, a term not otherwise found in Dorobo, [171] but equivalent to F. Br. S. in Nandi.

The clan animals are:

| | |
|---|---|
| Kapsegoi..... Moi..... | *kopsoyet* (crested crane). |
| Kipiegen..... | *kondekat* (baboon). |
| Kipsawei..... | *pemuiyo* (duiker). |
| Kapil..... | *tarait* (bush-pig). |
| Toiyoi..... | *rokta* (the rain). |
| Kororpor..... | *kimaketyet* (hyaena). |

[P.191,A]

Apart from the rule of exogamy, there are certain other marriage regulations: 614

1. A person may not marry anyone who comes into the *tiliet* or relationship (except F. Sis. D. D.), that is, anyone addressed by a relationship term, or as *oruyos*.
2. A man may not marry his wife's sister because such unions are thought to be sterile. [842]
3. A person may marry into the clan of his or her M., M.M., Br.W., or Sis.H.

Pre-marital intercourse with anyone in the *tiliet* is forbidden; but with a clanfellow condoned, though not approved of. [836]

The shortage of women and the lack of wealth have resulted in the Dorobo being largely monogamous, though if a man has the wealth, he may have more than one wife. The *hodua* (bride-price)[1] is said to have been formerly 4 oxen for slaughtering; today it is 1 cow, 1 ox and 4 goats, which go to the bride's father and become his personal property. This *hodua* is high for people who own little or no stock; but by means of gift exchange cattle can be obtained from the Nandi (See below, p. 192.) Rarity of divorce is another result of this shortage, and since a wife is something comparatively hard to come by, she is more cherished than is usual among other peoples where women are plentiful. The inability to get wives has produced a tendency to what may be called *soldiers*, that is, unmarried men (some of whom never marry) live entirely alone, and do all their domestic work, as well as hunting and cultivation, without assistance. 596 [556] 583 [431] [648] 586 589

## III

## ECONOMIC LIFE.

### *A. Environment.*

The home of the Kapchepkendi Dorobo is the western end of the high ground which occupies the country between Eldama Ravine and the Nandi escarpment. The greater part of it is covered with dense forest, and is crossed on the S. W. corner by two parallel paths from Kipkorom in the north to Ndoroton in the south. The forest begins about the 8,000 ft. contour, and to reach it from any side entails a steep climb of 131 [137] [487] 133

[1] On this term, see "Bride-price in antiquity," *MAN*, 1931, 187.

200-300 ft. in most places. Once the forest is reached, the slope is gradual, ranging from 8,200 ft. to 8,400 ft., though the main river, the Kipkurere, flows through a valley 1,000 ft. deep. The rainfall, taken at Kapchorua farm about two miles from the W. boundary of the forest, averages 56.54 inches over 9 years from 1929 to 1937: the maximum was 70.33 inches in 1937, the minimum 28.61 inches in 1933; in the forest itself the rainfall is undoubtedly higher. The forest is always damp: mists are frequent, and even in the dry weather it is not always quite dry, a condition which is responsible in part for the rather high infant mortality among the Dorobo. On the edge of the forest are glades with a fringe of thorn trees (acacia robusta), and between the forest and the farms is a strip of land, included in the Forest Reserve, which is suitable for cultivation and stock-keeping. The year is divided into two seasons, *Mwainonik*, the dry season from October to March, and *Iwot*, the wet season, from April to September. These determine both the now obsolescent hunting activities, and the increasing agricultural activities.

*B. Economic Activities.*

The economic life of the Dorobo may be divided into two phases: (1) the old hunting existence, which began to disappear about 1925 when the Government started seriously to restrict their forest life, and (2) the present trapping-agricultural life in which cultivation is becoming of increased importance.

The economic group is either the elementary family or the domestic family (or, the extended family). Sexual division of work overlaps to some extent, but most of the work outside the settlement is done by men (hunting, trapping, woodcutting, and intercourse with the outside world), while the women do the work inside the settlement, except that they collect all the vegetable food from the forest. Agricultural work is performed by both sexes. Things peculiar to women are: the making of clothes, leather work, and baskets; to men: making weapons and other utensils, digging coloured earth, and putting meat on the fire to cook (though the women look after it once it is on the fire).

[P. 192, A]

Both the social and the economic ranges of the Dorobo are very narrow. The family is a self-supporting unit, and a group of families forms a social unit; but the group is isolated, and the groups cohere through their strong clan solidarity and strict exogamy. There is no "tribe" as e.g. the Nandi, but a collection of family or clan groups forming a *koret* or district, and a collection of such groups within a given area having a common organization, customs, and dialect, and the innate idea that "we are the Dorobo of such-and-such a place." Thus the Kapchepkendi Dorobo (with whom this paper deals) distinguish themselves from the Dorobo living on Tindiret hill, though that hill is only some seven miles from Sosoiyo. (See map of the Dorobo country.) Before the Government dispersed them, the Dorobo possessed, more or less undisturbed, the whole of the forest. Now they have no land at all. But they maintain their solidarity in spite of disruption, by means of their isolation, strong clan-system, and the fact that outsiders, e.g. the Nandi, are half afraid of them (so long as they do not go into Nandi), as being rainmakers and magicians of no mean ability, a people who are, in fact, somewhat uncanny. Their external relations may be described under three heads as (1) acquisitional: exchange of goods and services with the Nandi, and, till about 80 years ago, with the Vasin Gishu Masae; (2) restrictive: the Government raids them for taxes, and takes away their land, which leads to (3) an attitude of deep suspicion towards all Europeans, though they are driven by economic pressure to work for them.

Productive activities are concerned with the following:

A. *Food*: meat (by hunting and trapping), honey, wild plants, eleusine and maize (grown or obtained), milk, maize meal, salt and beer.

B. *Non-edible*: houses, weapons, implements, utensils, clothing and ornaments (except of iron), firewood, traps, honey-barrels, coloured earth (which is dug in the eastern part of the forest and sold to the Nandi for cash.)

C. *Raw Materials*: wood, plants, and skins.

The exchange of their own products for things they do not make is governed by natural resources,

[P.192, B]

and by personal ability, and therefore to some extent by their geographical setting. They have no iron ore, no metallurgic knowledge, and so all ironwork is imported from the Nandi. Tobacco, which they like, is not grown as yet, and this too must be obtained from the Nandi. There is a regular exchange of honey, skins, and baskets, for arrowheads, knives, tobacco, seeds, pottery, etc., and a scale of exchange values has come into existence:

1 arrow head is given for a gourd of honey.
1 bundle of tobacco is given for a bag of honey.
1 large pot is given for a large bushbuck skin.
1 small pot is given for a duiker skin.
2 basketfuls of seed for one basket.[1]

Sometimes personal services are given, e.g. a day's weeding in the smith's garden for two knives.

Cattle are obtained from the Nandi, to a limited extent, by a system of gift exchange for furs. The Nandi make friends with the Dorobo chiefly for the purpose of getting honey, and the Dorobo will give some to his Nandi friend without expectation of an immediate return. Presently the Nandi gives the Dorobo a goat, and this exchange of gifts paves the way for further and more important transactions: eventually the Dorobo offers his friend a fur cloak for an ox, as e.g. my friend Arap Minig acquired one from a Nandi called Kapkile at Ollesos; he also got another in exchange for 7 goats, which he bought out of his wages for working on a farm.

### C. *Techniques*

#### 1. Hunting

The dry weather, *muainonik*, is the shooting season, and the wet weather, *imot*, is the time for trapping. The weapon is the bow and arrow (spears are not used by the Kapchepkendi Dorobo), and the hunters use dogs.

In wet weather buck are caught in traps. In the dry season, wild pig of various kinds[2] were

[1] A honey-bag is about 12 ins. deep, and 8 ins. wide; it contains about twice as much honey as a gourd. A basket (kerepet) is about 6 ins. deep and 6½ ins. wide at the top.

[2] *Tumda*, the wart-hog (Phacochoerus aethiopicus); and *Toret*, the giant hog or bush-pig (Hylochoerus Meinertzhageni).

hunted by concerted action, and still are, to a limited extent, by individuals, as well as several species of monkey.[1] There seems to have been no very strict close season, as pig were occasionally hunted in the wet weather, though not often, since the forest is difficult to traverse when wet. There are now no lion or elephant, but they are said to have existed when the Sawe and Kipkoiimet ages were young men, i.e. about 1860. Leopards are still common, and are still shot if one runs up a tree after being put up by dogs; they are sometimes caught in traps made of wire, which is not bought, but searched for or stolen from farms. However, a trap made by one Arap Megati which caught a leopard during one of my visits was said to be exceptional. Buffalo no longer exist in the western end of the forest where the Kapchepkendi live, but they occur near Londiani, a few miles to the east.

Hunting parties varied from two to eight men. If, say, eight went out, half would go along one bank of a stream, and half along the other bank, so that one or other party would be sure to get something. They met after the kill, and cooked the meat and ate some of it on the spot. The rest was divided among the hunters and taken home for their families, the unsuccessful members of the hunt receiving a share from those who made the kill. The hunter has to provide, not only his own (elementary) family, but also his father, mother, and wife's father with meat, and the distribution of meat in order of priority, is:—

*Hunter*: *Meat to*

1. Wife and children.
2. Father and mother.
3. Wife's father.
4. Neighbours (clansmen).

A man has (or had till they were evicted by the government) an hereditary right over a piece of forest, which included hunting, trapping, bee-keeping, and food-gathering. Other people who wanted to hunt there asked permission to do so, for otherwise the right-holder might kill anyone.

[1] *Sairet*, Colobus guereza;
*Cheruet*, Cercopithecus griseo-viridis;
*Tisiet*, Sykes' monkey or Cercopithecus albigularis;
*Komokchot*, the baboon, Papio cynocephalus.

he found hunting on his area, though he would be liable to pay blood-cattle for homicide.

As for trapping, it is said that nobody steals meat from traps because their bellies would swell to a great size if they ate stolen meat. Public opinion, too, is strongly against such a mean crime, and is of itself a powerful deterrent. Nowadays trapping is the chief source of meat, and the common practice is for a man to set three or four traps at a time in different places, and to visit them every two days or so to see if anything has been caught.

Monkeys and buck[1] are killed for their meat and skins; pig provide meat and gut for bow-strings.

## 2. Agriculture.[2]

The Dorobo are in process of changing from a hunting to an agricultural existence, from the uncertain hunting economy to the more certain one of agriculture; and the same economic pressure which has forced them to till the soil is now encouraging a desire for cattle, which are being slowly and laboriously acquired. This leads in turn to a more self-supporting state, with less dependence on the Nandi for grain crops; and agricultural techniques, both in tillage and stock, are being learnt from the Nandi and from Europeans.

Both sexes work in the cultivated plots (*imbaret*), and are helped by children, who weed the crops, herd the stock, and milk the cows. The crops grown at present are eleusine (*eleusine coracana*, called *wimbi* in Swahili) and maize; millet and tobacco are still bought from the Nandi, from whom the Dorobo also get eleusine and maize seed when necessary. Unlike the distribution of the forest into hunting areas, people cultivate the ground close to their own homes, and a group

[1] The buck killed are:
*Kipselket*, blue duiker (cehpalophus sequatorialis).
*Mindet*, red duiker (c. igna-isseci.)
*Keremaiit*, bush buck (tragelaphus scriptus.)
*Irukutet*, reed-buck
*Kenyelet*, oribi
*Kipsomeret*, water-buck (cobus ellipsiprymnus).

[2] I prefer the term 'agriculture' to 'horticulture,' for the latter implies mere cultivation, with no livestock, and in East Africa agriculture is almost always practised in conjunction with stock-rearing, even if only on a small scale.

[P. 194, A]

shares the *imbaret*, each house having its own strip, the whole being surrounded by a thorn fence which all help to make. Each is therefore a family or clan *imbaret*, and the group is an independent labour unit. 241 423 [351] [614]

The grain crops are stored either in granaries of Nandi type, or else in the loft (*tapot*) of the hut; but as most of the crop is eaten before or soon after it is reaped, and as the yields are not large owing to the small areas planted, storage problems are not yet acute. Further supplies of food are got (1) by purchase or exchange; (2) by begging 251 261 [437] [735]

[P.194, B]

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[548]

or working for it; (3) by prostitution.

Eleusine is made into beer as well as eaten; honey provides both food and intoxicant (*kipketinik*), and salt is made by burning the leaves of *tepeyguet* (*aemilia integrifolia*). 273 262 263

Fig. 1 shows a clan-settlement, and the division of the *imbaret* among the four households which form it. 361 614

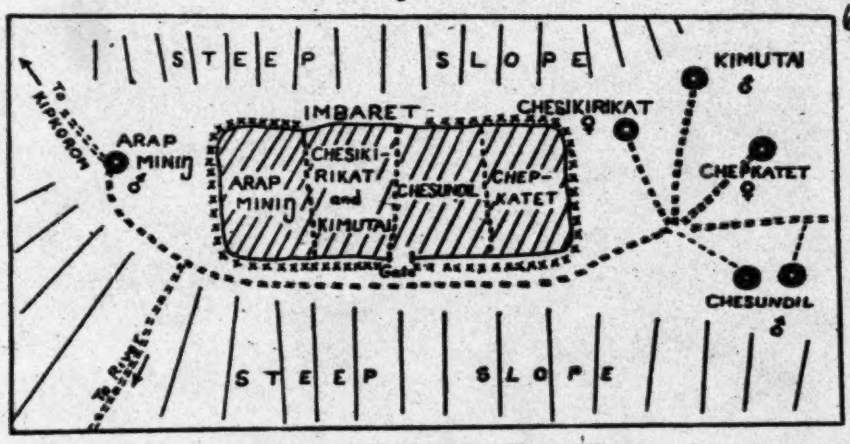
The relationship between the various members of this settlement is shown in the table on page 195.

$n^1, n^2$ [see category 116, pp. 194 (c), 195 -- Analyst]

[P. 194, C]

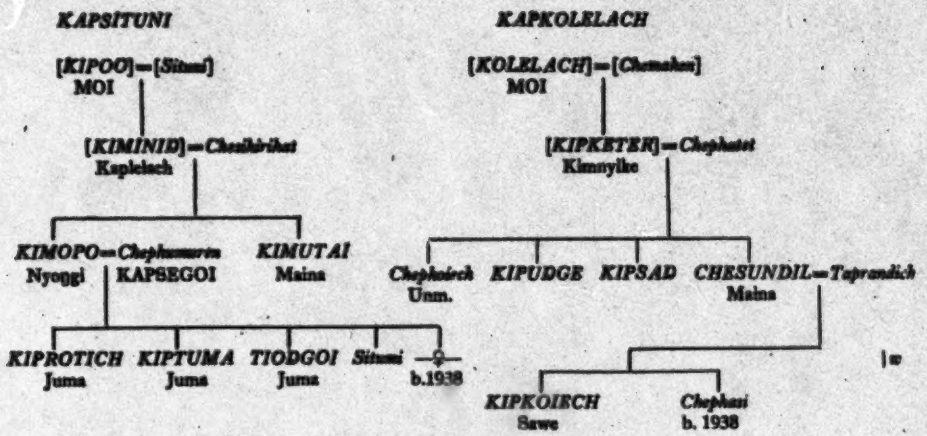
361
614

Fig. 1




CLAN-SETTLEMENT AT KIPUKWA

14: Huntingford E-5 (1938-1939) 1942 FL6 Dorobo FL6
[P 195]




Those in brackets [ ] are dead. ♂ in capitals.

GENEALOGY OF TWO EXTENDED FAMILIES, UNRELATED BUT OF THE SAME CLAN, LIVING IN ONE SETTLEMENT AT KIPUKWA.

1. Those in italics are living at Kipukwa (i.e. in 1938).
2. The Kapsituni family take their name from a woman. (Kap- here means 'family of.')
3. This table also illustrates age-descent (ipinda), ages being written in roman script, Maina.

601
614

[P. 196, A]

Economic life to-day is centred more and more on the *imbaret* than on hunting.

The family group is interdependent: the men trap, make tools, protect the family; the women look after house and children, and prepare food; the children, while dependent on their parents for existence, help them with the *imbaret* and live-stock, and in various other small ways.

There is little specialization, since all men can make traps and honey-barrels, and all women can make baskets. Joint-production occurs in (1) house-building, when the whole family takes part; (2) cultivation; (3) in hunting and in digging coloured earth. Food produced by the family is shared by husband, wife, and children, and also by the husband's and the wife's parents. Meat caught by trapping is divided between the trapper's family and the other people living in the settlement. Vegetable foods are not shared thus, since *they can be got by all.* *Hospitality* is given to visiting relatives, clansmen, age-mates (though they do not sleep with their host's wife), and even to stray travellers, once their good faith is established. Beer is drunk at social gatherings of men or women, at clan councils, and on ceremonial occasions. And just as meat is distributed in a particular way (p. 193), so with tobacco: a man who acquires some gives it first to his father, then to his wife's father, and lastly to his brothers and clansmen, if it will go as far.

The typical Dorobo hut, *kachonget*, is extremely simple, being no more than a framework of sticks covered with leaves, and a hide on top. They are now building larger and better huts of Nandi type, sometimes with unplastered walls; and an intermediate form may be seen, with a nearly flat roof.

## D. THE MAGICO-RELIGIOUS ASPECT OF ECONOMIC

That the Dorobo had hunting magic is certain: old men say that some had it, while others had none; my friend Arap Minji, for example, says he was one of those who had none. Since hunting is the one phase of Dorobo life that appears to be gone for ever as a result of government action (in spite of sporadic individual activities), this important aspect is, I fear, irrecoverable.

important aspect is, I fear, irrecoverable. I have been in the forest in both wet and dry seasons, and while trapping is still carried on, I could see no sign of hunting (i.e. shooting), and the description of a hunt is from narration.[1] Fear of a government which forbids hunting, and has of late itself hunted the Dorobo, has, I think, effectually sealed the lips of one or two who would normally have spoken on the subject. My informants, however, did say that sexual intercourse was forbidden before setting out on a hunt, though not before or during the process of trapping. In hunting there is an element of personal danger and of uncertainty as to success; magic helps to give confidence, and abstinence to avert ill-luck. In trapping the process is mechanical, largely a matter of technological skill, and with little danger to the trapper, who is sure to catch something sooner or later.

On the other hand, it is believed that both *Asis* (god) and the *chesomiloi* (both the good ancestral and the bad elemental) can influence a man's hunting, and before starting out to set a trap, he will say:

*Asis, ipüyech payek,*
God, give-us-enough meat,

or,

*Chesomilōk, ohōnech tiony se kipare.*
The-spirits, give-us a-beast which we-may-kill.

Honey (*kumiat*) is an important article of Dorobo diet, and provides both food and intoxicant: it is to them what milk is to a pastoral people. It is not stuff that can be picked up anywhere, but requires a certain technique, and, above all, the presence of bees in a suitable place. As, therefore, it has an actual social value, so it has acquired a ritual value, and certain observances are necessary if the supply of honey is not to fail. First, you must have your bees, and a man who has put up a new honey-barrel must take steps to ensure that it is inhabited. This he does by calling out, in an unnatural high-pitched voice, "Bees, bees, all you who are in this country, Come now and make honey here."

[1] Leopards, as already mentioned, are killed occasionally when they become aggressive and threaten livestock; but there are no organized leopard hunts, and in any case leopards are vermin.

[P.197,A]

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come now and make honey here." Then, blood and fruit must not be eaten on the same day as honey, nor must bits of the comb be left lying about; they must be carefully covered up. The first of these prohibitions is analogous to the Nandi avoidance of meat and milk on the same day; the second, though the Dorobo say it is done "so that other people shall not see it," is also due to the ritual value of honey, and the consequent necessity of showing respect towards it.

In the ritual treatment of certain actions the use of certain materials is essential if the ritual is to be effective. Thus, a homicide must be rubbed with *eiyat*, the undigested grass from the stomach of a goat or sheep, and he must also be oiled with 'butter' (milk shaken in a gourd till it has gone oily and semi-solid); an unmarried girl who has had a child must also be rubbed with *eiyat*; a sick person whose illness is due to witchcraft must be oiled with goat's fat or butter; and a man who has killed an enemy must paint his face with five stripes of white earth—one across the forehead

789
825
[682]
[848]
[154]
789
[726]
[823]

14:Huntingford E-S (1939-1939):1942
FLS Dorobo FLS

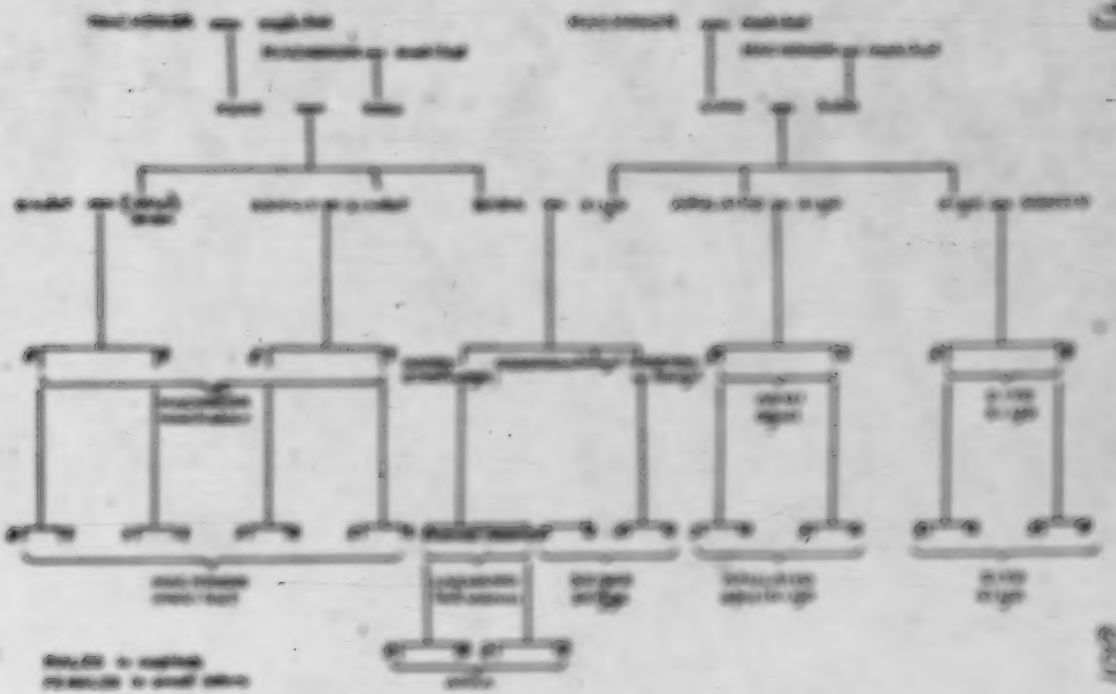
[P.197, B]

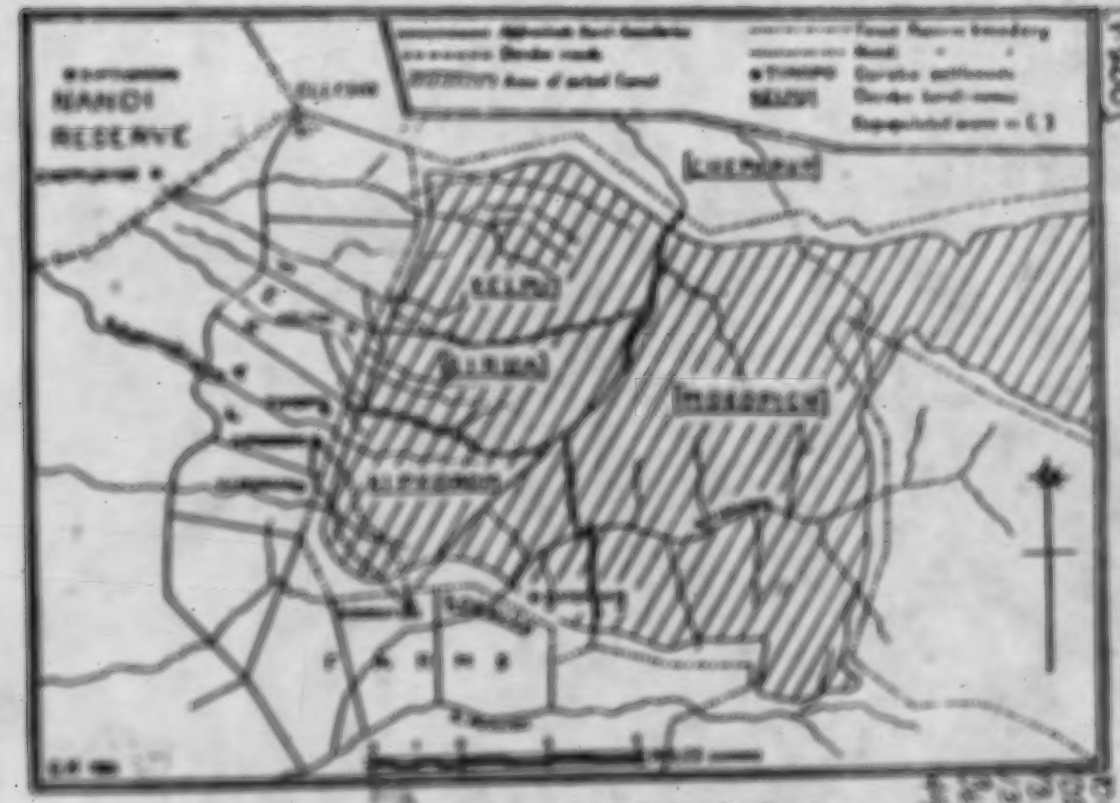
789
one down each side of the nose, and one down [786]
the centre of each cheek. [825]

Now it seems that a particular material is not 789
always essential, i.e. for a homicide either a goat or 825
a sheep may be killed to get the *ojuet*, and a sick
man may be anointed either with goat's fat or with
butter (though it must be a she-goat). An alterna-
tive is thus sometimes just as effective. But an
essential feature is that the remedy must be
something that is not easy to obtain; till quite [231]
recently, few Dorobo had any goats, sheep, or
cattle from which they could get the necessary fat,
*ojuet*, or butter, and even now many still lack
them; nor does anybody keep a permanent stock
of white earth in his hut. The whole procedure
is an act of faith as much as anything else, and
entails a possibly laborious search for the
necessary material. There is also an economic
[illegible], for whom [illegible] 437
must buy the animals they need, so that into what
might seem to be a purely ritual transaction,
enters an element of business.

## TABLE OF DIVORCE RELATIONSHIP TERMS I.E. SPEAKING

TABLE OF DOROBO RELATIONSHIP TERMS: [illegible] SPEAKING






Sketch map of the Kapchepkendi Dairies Country